

Wasatch Stake Tabernacle
Main Street at 100 North Street
Heber City
Wasatch County
Utah

HABS No. U-27

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PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20240

WASATCH STAKE TABERNACLE

Location: Main Street at 100 North Street, Heber City,
Wasatch County, Utah.
Latitude: 40° 30' 31" N Longitude: 111° 24' 48" W

Present Owner: Heber City

Present Occupant: None

Present Use: Community Hall

Statement of
Significance: One of the best preserved of the early tabernacles,
this is part of what is probably the only remaining
original Mormon town square in Utah not encroached
upon by other buildings.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Original and subsequent owners:

Wasatch Stake of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter
Day Saints

Heber City

2. Date of erection: 1889

3. Architect: Alex Fortie

4. Builder, suppliers, etc: See Historical Account

5. Original plan and construction: An early historian,
evidently writing during the period of construction
(1887-89) described the building as follows:

"The building is 50 x 95 feet, thirty feet in height to the square. It is built on a heavy foundation which is 5 feet wide at the bottom and tapers upward to 3 feet at the top. The walls are two feet thick, covered with a self supporting wood and iron roof. From this point the tower will be completed in redwood and metal extending about twenty-five feet, making it in all about ninety feet high to the top of the weather vane. The tower is fourteen feet square - the walls of the building are strengthened by buttresses on the sides, front and rear. Galleries are erected on each side and end. The capacity is 1500...."

The original plan of the building had an entrance foyer with stairs leading to the front (east) gallery. The large assembly hall had a stand at the west end, consisting of three tiers of seats, with a pulpit at the end of each row, and used by church officials. Galleries were on the end (east) north and south sides, with four rows of seats. Access to the tower was made through the east gallery, up winding steps to the belfry where a large bell was hung. The bell was used to announce church meetings, important events, and when necessary as a town fire alarm. At the rear (west) end of the main assembly space were two meeting rooms, situated one above the other behind the stand. The lower room was known as the "back room"; the upper room, access to which was through the galleries, was called the "circle room".

The floors were scrubbed and bleached with home made soap. Home made carpets were laid down the aisles. Coal oil lamps hanging from the ceiling furnished light. The building was heated by pot-bellied stoves in each of four corners of the assembly hall. A definite seating arrangement was prescribed. Men sat on the south side, women on the north side, ladies with babies around the stoves in the corners, and mixed couples in the center.

6. Alterations: In 1928 the interior of the building was extensively remodeled. The side galleries and the stand were removed, and the "back room" and "circle room" were replaced with a large atage, with space for choir and organ. The rear (east) gallery was made deeper. The main floor was made to slope up to the rear. A new heating plant was added beneath the stage area. All gallery columns were removed except those required for support of the east gallery. The Wasatch Wave of September 16, 1928 announced the remodeling cost as \$20,000. This is substantially the existing plan. Interior finish is plaster, painted. Lighting is by suspended incandescent fixtures.

B. Historical Events and Persons Associated with the Building:

The Wasatch Stake President Abram Hatch, served as superintendent of the project. Elisha Averett was in charge of the masonry work and Alex Fortie directed the carpentry work. The shingles on the tower were made of sheet metal and placed by Frederick O. Buell. Francis Kirby did the painting. The red sandstone was hand quarried from the mountains east of Heber at Lake Creek. The building was dedicated on May 5, 1889, and was announced to cost "more than \$30,000." by Mr. Hatch.

C. Sources of Information:

1. Primary and unpublished sources:

Interview with Mr. Don Barker, President, Heber City Historical Society.

Interview with Mrs. Ruth Witt, Treasurer, Heber City Historical Society.

2. Bibliography:

Mortimer, Wm. James. How Beautiful Upon the Mountains, Daughters of the Utah Pioneers, 1963.

Save the Tabernacle, pamphlet, Committee for the Preservation of the Heber Tabernacle, (No date, but published 1966)

Wasatch Wave, May 11, 1889.

Wasatch Wave, June 15 and September 15, 1928.

Prepared by John L. Giusti, AIA
September 5, 1967

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural interest: In addition to being a typical early Mormon meeting house, it is part of the Heber Town Square which in itself is typical of the early Utah town square on which were located governmental, recreational and religious activities.
2. Foundations: Rough coursed red sandstone ashlar, five feet thick at the bottom tapering to three feet at the top.
3. Wall construction, finish and color: Rough coursed red sandstone ashlar.
4. Structural system, framing: Masonry walls support a timber roof frame.
5. Porches and stoops: The front entrance has a cut red sandstone stoop with two risers. The side entrances have modern concrete stoops.
6. Openings:

- a. Doorways and doors: Front double doorway has an elliptical arched opening. Side doorways are recessed with flat lintels. All doors are modern.
- b. Windows and shutters: Auditorium double window openings are two stories high but have windows only at floor and gallery levels. Openings have elliptical arches. Each window is double hung and has two-over-two lights. Front tower windows are double hung with gothic muntins and mullions inside a gothic arched opening. Stage window openings have elliptical arches and are located at floor and gallery levels. All windows have wood trim moldings.

7. Roof:

- a. Shape, covering: Roof is gabled and covered with rolled asphalt roofing.
- b. Cornice: Wood cornice with crown and bed moldings returns on the gabled ends.
- c. Dormers, cupolas, towers: The curved hip roof of the bell tower is covered with sheet metal shingles and has a weather vane. The tower is redwood.

C. Description of Interior:

- 1. Floor plans: Originally the building had a large auditorium space with a horseshoe gallery. Two meeting rooms were located above one another at the west end. There is an entrance foyer beneath the tower. In the 1928 remodeling the side galleries were removed and the east gallery was enlarged. The west meeting rooms were removed and a stage was put in the west end, with furnace and dressing rooms beneath it.
- 2. Stairways: Gallery stairs in the northeast and the southeast corners are probably not original. Modern stairs along the northwest and southwest walls provide access to the stage and dressing areas. A square stairway ascends the bell tower from the gallery.
- 3. Flooring: Sloping wood floor of auditorium is not original.
- 4. Wall and ceiling finish: Interior finish is painted plaster.
- 5. Doorways and doors: No original interior doorways remain.

6. Decorative features and trim: The only significant trim is on the gallery rail where panel molds surround a patera, forming a pattern which is repeated at eleven inch intervals.
7. Lighting, type of fixtures: Modern incandescent fixtures replace original coal oil lamps. Lights have always hung from the ceiling.
8. Heating: Original heat was from stoves located in the four corners of the auditorium. A central furnace was installed in 1928.

D. Site and Surroundings:

1. Orientation: The building front is 142' from the center of Main Street and its long north side is 153' from 100 North Street.
2. Landscaping and walks, enclosures: The Wasatch Stake Tabernacle is centered in the northeast quadrant of the park-like Heber Town Square. To its south are the Wasatch County Courthouse and Jail. To its west is the Heber Amusement Hall. A red sandstone walk extends east from the front to Main Street.

Prepared by C. W. Barrow, Jr.
Student Assistant Architect
Utah Project 1967
July 16, 1967

PART III. PROJECT INFORMATION

This record is part of a Utah Survey conducted in the summers of 1967 and 1968 under joint sponsorship of the Historic American Buildings Survey of the Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation of the National Park Service and the Utah Heritage Foundation.

Field work, historic research and record drawings were done under the direction of Project Supervisor Paul Goeldner, AIA (Texas Tech University) assisted by Project Historian John L. Giusti, AIA (University of Utah). Photographs were made by P. Kent Fairbanks of Salt Lake City.

Student Assistant Architects on the 1967 team were Robert M. Swanson and Charles W. Barrow, (University of Texas) and Kenneth L. Lambert and Keith Sorenson, (University of Utah). 1968 Student Assistant Architects were Keith Sorenson, Charles D. Harker and Robert Schriever, (University of Utah) and Donald G. Prycer, (Texas A. & M. University).